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> *Our troubled planet can no longer afford the luxury of pursuits confined to an ivory tower. Scholarship has to prove its worth, not on its own terms, but by service to the nation and the world.*
> - Handlin, cited in Boyer (1994: A48)

1. INTRODUCTION

Across Canada and beyond its borders, there is a growing realization that life inside the 'ivory tower' leaves university students and faculty too isolated from surrounding communities. Increasingly, there are rumblings from both inside universities and from communities at large about the tendency for academics to work within a vacuum and to conduct 'decontextualized' research. As a result, there is an international movement afoot to re-evaluate the purpose of academic study and research and to fill the university/community gap.

The purpose of this paper is to identify both collaborative and noncollaborative approaches to building university/community relationships and to identify factors that have made collaborative approaches beneficial for the communities involved. We have identified four models of university/community relationships: the 'Co-Learning Model', the 'Community Service Model', the 'Charity Model' and the 'Ivory Tower Model'. We have determined that the 'Co-Learning Model' is the best example of a collaborative, mutually beneficial approach to forming university/community relationships.

Due to limitations in resources, we have had to focus our research to case studies among universities in English-speaking, technologically-developed countries, but we recognize that innovative university/community collaborations are occurring throughout the world. We encourage readers to explore local, national and international examples of university/community collaboration.

2. LADDER OF PARTICIPATION

We have used the 'Ladder of Participation' developed by Sherry Arnstein (1969) to provide some context for the models of university/community collaboration that we will be discussing in this paper. Arnstein's Ladder of Participation provides us with a good reference point for modeling the success of citizen participation efforts.

At the bottom of the ladder, citizens have virtually no control in the process of collaboration. Models of university/community collaboration that fit at the bottom of the ladder do not encourage substantial community participation in decision-making processes.

At the top of the ladder, citizens guide the collaboration projects. Projects that can be situated at the top of the ladder are fully participatory and support the self-empowerment of communities.

The rungs on the ladder of participation, from top to bottom, are:

Citizen Control: Citizens have full control of the process. This can only be achieved when the community has a strong foundation (i.e. funding, capacity, tools, access to information).

Delegated Power: Citizens achieve dominant decision making power.

Partnership: Community and agency make and implement decisions together.

Placation: Community is involved in the decision-making process but decisions are still made by an external agency.

Consultation: The agency finds out what the community wants and needs but participation is limited.

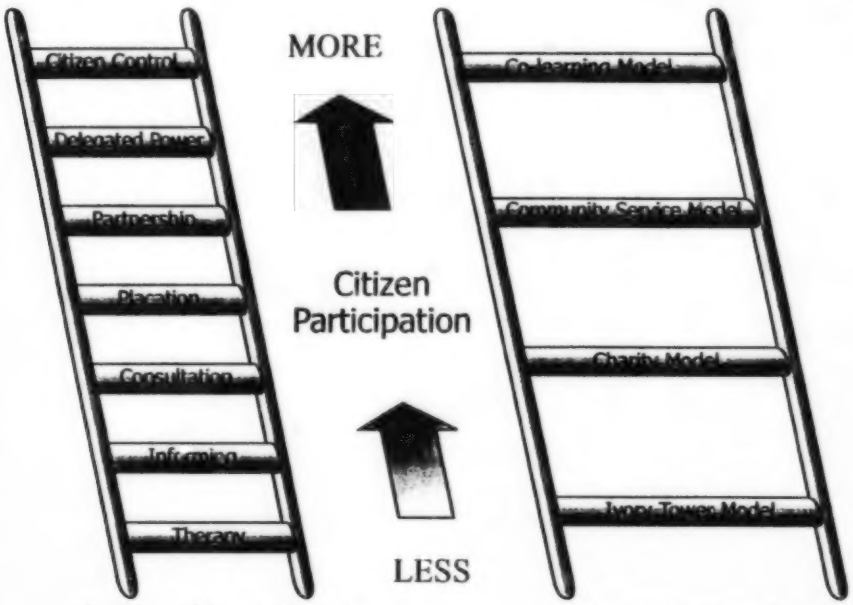
Informing: The community is informed about their rights but is not provided with the opportunity or capacity to exercise these rights.

Therapy: The community is allowed to vent feelings and frustrations, but nothing more.

3. MODELS OF COMMUNITY/UNIVERSITY RELATIONSHIPS

The chart below illustrates how the models of university/community relationships tend to fit in relation to the Arnstein's Ladder of Participation.

Figure 1. A description of how the four models of university/community collaboration might be situated in relation to Arnstein's Ladder of Participation.



3.1 The Ivory Tower Model

One of the biggest reasons why university faculty became isolated from the community and from each other is due to the way in which most western academic institutions have historically been structured. Most universities have been modeled after the nineteenth century German university "wherein community-disengaged, independently working scholars pursued 'ethereal' knowledge" (Lynton and Elton 1987). In this way, knowledge wasn't located in any time or place but existed utterly devoid of context.

Separation of faculty into various disciplines and ultimately into precise specialties has further served to alienate academic research from any sociocultural context, and to decrease knowledge sharing and interdisciplinary thinking.

We've called this approach, or rather lack of approach, to university/community collaborations the 'Ivory Tower Model'. In referring back to Arnstein's Ladder of Participation, we can see that universities following this model would probably only have contact with the community at the 'bottom rungs' of the ladder ('therapy' or 'informing') or may not concern themselves at all with engaging in community outreach.

3.2 The Charity Model

The 'Charity Model' had its beginnings in nineteenth century England. Of that time period, it has been said that "the aristocrats... confined their activities for the most part to paternal philanthropy and condescending reform" (Bauer 1934: 65). Thus began in earnest the tendency for middle class organizations to bequeath charity upon the 'deserving poor'. This cultural history has influenced the way in which many universities work with communities to this day.

The whole concept of 'charity' denotes inequality in power. It implies the beneficence of people in helping those who are deemed not to be able to help themselves, to give to communities what they are considered unable to provide for themselves. The 'Charity Model' might be well meaning, but the ability of this sort of university/community linkage to lead to the empowerment of community members will be extremely limited.

A contemporary critique of the 'Charity Model' can be found in the work of John McKnight. He found that three of the main side effects of social interventions were:

1) The necessary degradation of the individual's self-concept by the messages of deficiency, wrongness, broken-ness and need that the helper brings;

2) The fact that the majority of all public investments in the poor are given to non-poor people;

3) The phenomena which dictates that each time we say we need more agencies, more systems, more research, we are making a decision that the neighbourhood associations, leadership and capabilities are inadequate to solve the problem and therefore reinforcing residents' dependency.

- paraphrased from Cayley and McKnight (1994: 4-5).

The 'Charity Model' means that citizen participation in community development will be limited to the lower rungs of Arnstein's Ladder: 'therapy', 'informing', 'consultation' or 'placation' may take place.

3.3 The Community Service Model

Efforts have been made within universities to avoid the 'Ivory Tower' and 'Charity' approaches to university/community relations. What we have described as the 'Community Service Model' refers to a university's pursuit of "community-based experiential learning combined with reflection" (Keith 1998: 290), whereby the community serves as a "learning laboratory" for university students, and is seen to benefit from academic support.

The 'Community Service Model' shows more respect for citizen participation than the previous two models we've described. Universities have entered into functioning partnerships with communities based on this approach, and have shown themselves to be effective "agents of technical assistance, knowledge development, demonstration, training and dissemination" (Lerner and Simon 1998: 4). This model best corresponds with the 'partnership' rung of Arnstein's Ladder.

While the 'Community Service Model' might help universities to build bridges with the 'real world' outside university gates, and to contextualize faculty and student research, there are as yet substantial difficulties with this approach.

Universities pursuing the 'Community Service Model' often fail to substantially address or question the power imbalances that exist between universities and the communities in which they work. There is often a tendency to regard academic researchers as the only legitimate producers of knowledge. In short, the 'Community Service Model' tends to retain the element of the 'Charity Model' which means that academics are "doing for" the community rather than "doing with".

3.4 The Co-Learning Model

Through our research we have found examples of equitable university/community collaborations. These relationships are illustrated by what we have termed the 'Co-Learning Model'.

The 'Co-Learning Model'...

.....**is fully collaborative.** Both the university and the community are equal players in designing and overseeing projects. They are working together, unlike the arms length 'Charity Model' where the connection is paternal, or the 'Community Service Model' through which students are working "for" rather than "with" the community.

.....**promotes mutual learning.** Both the university and community learn with each other. There is a large degree of knowledge sharing as opposed to the other models that we've described in which the university tends to get a larger share of the benefits of participation.

.....**encourages equal valuation of all knowledge.** The 'Co-Learning Model' challenges the tendency for academia to undervalue non-academic knowledge. Community-derived knowledge, which comes from those who have lived and worked within a neighbourhood, is recognized to be at least as valuable as the theoretical knowledge generated within universities.

The 'Co-Learning Model' tends to fit best at the highest rungs of Arnstein's Ladder of Participation: 'Delegated Power' and 'Citizen Control'.

4. CASE STUDIES

From the numerous university/community collaborations that we identified, we have focused on a representative sample of four university programs: those of the University College of Cape Breton, the Liverpool university coalition, San Francisco State University and Michigan State University. The University College of Cape Breton has set up a creative, interdisciplinary Bachelor's Program. Liverpool's Interchange Program is a joint university/community venture involving all four universities of the region. In the case of the San Francisco Urban Institute, a separate yet affiliated partnership office has been set up alongside San Francisco State University. Finally, the Michigan State University's Community and Economic Development Program is unique in that it has developed outreach offices in cities throughout the region.

Our information about these four programs comes from university/institute web sites and publications, and in some cases from telephone interviews with program representatives.

These four programs do not represent any one of the models of university/community collaborations that we've outlined above. Rather, different models may be reflected in different aspects of each program. Where each program fits in relation to Arnstein's Ladder of Participation will depend not only on the goals and intent of the programs, but also on styles and methods of administration. It was not within the scope of our research to do comprehensive assessments on the successes and shortcomings of each program, but simply to summarize the innovative approaches that each program has taken.

4.1 University College of Cape Breton (UCCB), Canada

Students of the Bachelor of Arts in Community Studies (BACS) Program at UCCB are required to do research which is responsive to community concerns. The curriculum has been set up to be "problem-centred" so that any research which is conducted can be used directly by the community involved in the study.

The BACS degree has been offered since the mid-70's and was originally conceived as a combination of academic and vocational interests. The program is structured on the educational philosophy that values the university as a community of scholars "who respect the unity of knowledge and the dignity of work" (website).

Each student entering the program draws up a graduation plan based on personal career goals. Extensive individual counseling is offered while formulating this plan. In the final year of study, students are graded on oral presentations to all department faculty. Students share in departmental decision-making as voting members of curriculum, hiring and recruitment committees.

The Department of Problem Centred Studies (PCS) is one of five departments within the BACS School of Community Studies, which in itself is one of four schools combining academic and vocational streams. PCS has seven required courses for its students, each course in a different academic discipline. Four of these courses involve essays and work placements in which students perform 160 hours of volunteer community work related to their career objectives. Students are also expected to maintain journals which document their learning, and to write two extensive reflections each year on their experiences in the program. The remaining three mandatory courses place students in small groups with faculty advisors to do "process learning". In the first year, students identify and explore issues and develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork and secondary

research. In their second and third years of the program, the groups learn primary research techniques as well as develop and conduct community research projects.

There have been a number of difficulties and benefits identified by BACS in relation to this program. A strong advantage of the program, as identified by the Dean of the UCCB's School of Community Studies, has been the creativity and energy which come from "harnessing the engine of knowledge" at UCCB in service to the community of Cape Breton; challenges facing the local economy and society have been addressed in a strong and vibrant manner. Other positive repercussions of the BACS program include the sense of reward, indeed the "immense satisfaction", that participants feel upon seeing the fruits of their labours and learning to become, as stated by faculty member Tony Smith, "democratic egalitarians". Ongoing surveys have shown that students and graduates appreciate their participation in the program.

Some drawbacks have been identified. One challenge is that of attracting faculty committed to teaching in an interdisciplinary, service-oriented context. Another is gaining acceptance for this model within the university. Another problem is finding enough local work placements for student volunteers and helping community agencies to use them appropriately. Finally, continuing effort must be put into validating the program's cost-effectiveness and outcomes.

4.2 Interchange: A Joint Program of the University of Liverpool, Liverpool John Moores University and Liverpool Hope University College, United Kingdom

The Interchange program of Liverpool, United Kingdom, brings a creative approach to university/community collaborations. Winner of the Partnership Trust Award of 1995, 'Learning Through Service', this program offers community research exchanges as a means of building bridges between academic institutions and society at large.

Interchange acts as a 'broker' between the research needs of the local community and the research expertise of students at Liverpool's universities. Voluntary organizations and community groups can approach the Interchange program as a common point of access to academic support within the city.

Students can work with community organizations on areas of research which have been identified by these non-profit groups. Interchange is limited by its charitable status to working only with the voluntary sector. Students receive university credit as well as university support and supervision during the length of their projects.

The Interchange Office has identified seven ways in which its program provides benefits to students.

Interchange projects enable students to:

- *Develop their personal skills and strategies for their life-long learning through positive action in their local community;*
- *Gain confidence and self-esteem;*
- *Own and manage their own learning;*
- *Develop their skills, knowledge and experience;*
- *Evaluate their own development;*
- *Take their next step into education, training and education; and*
- *Benefit others in the community and workplace.*
    - http://www.bham.ac.uk/cobolt/description

The Interchange philosophy is based on collaboration, both in the style and methods of the research. The project is negotiated, and an informal contract (a 'Research Agreement') is agreed upon by all parties before any research is undertaken. The partnering organization has ample opportunity to give feedback on research findings, and students are expected to write their reports "in clear and accessible language", and to make the presentation of research findings easily understandable.

The idea behind this program is that the group or organization in question can make immediate use of the information in the Report. Students' work has gained context and found its place in "real time". One crucial component of the program is that the community group is granted copyright of the Report, and is able to decide how the Report will be distributed or publicized thereafter.

We did not find any evidence of negative aspects or unintended effects of this educational program, nor of the next two case studies we will present. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that shortcomings may well exist, and that the very lack of information about the programs' shortfalls may indicate a lack of reflexivity and/or transparency within these programs' publications.

4.3 The San Francisco Urban Institute, United States

The San Francisco Urban Institute (SFUI) is a non-profit research and action project of San Francisco State University (SFSU). The Institute was founded by a coalition of university and community leaders in 1992. SFUI addresses issues such as economic development, workforce preparation, urban-environmental restoration, inner-city education, health, and community development.

SFUI prefers to think of itself as an "action tank" rather than a "think tank". It is involved in detailed program and policy evaluation as well as the implementation of cooperative service delivery projects. The main focus of the Institute is to "build collaborative projects bridging university and community-based organizations, businesses, labor and city agencies".

SFUI brings together San Francisco's civic, community, business, labour and other leaders to develop and discuss "issues of civic importance". Through ongoing dialogue, the Institute has developed strong relationships with a broad range of community groups as well as with city government.

The partnerships developed through university/community dialogue have enabled numerous SFSU students to become involved in community internships. These internship opportunities offer student involvement in projects that range from community-based soup kitchens, to poetry workshops for children, to mental health programs. These internships have provided students with hands-on experience, and have provided communities with resources to fill community needs which they themselves have identified.

The Institute also publishes a quarterly magazine that focuses on issues of importance to residents of the San Francisco area.

4.4 Michigan State University, Center for Urban Affairs Community and Economic Development Program, United States

Michigan State University (MSU) has one of the longest running university/community collaboration programs in the United States. Michigan State established its first Center for Urban Affairs

Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP) in Lansing Michigan in 1970. Since then, MSU has expanded its outreach and now has CEDP offices throughout Michigan.

MSU's Community and Economic Development Program maintains a full-time presence in targeted communities. Each targeted city has a resident community development professional who lives on-site and works with various community advisory committees. This university outreach faculty member fosters relationships with local development groups in order to facilitate the flow of information between the university and the community.

CEDP's mission is "to facilitate the use of university and community resources to address urban issues that enhance the quality of life".

In carrying out its mission, CEDP:

- *Provides training and direct assistance to increase the capabilities of community-based organizations.*
- *Assists community-based organizations with identifying concerns in the community and developing adequate responses to urban problems.*
- *Conducts research that assists in the development and implementation of urban problem-solving strategies.*
- *Promotes and expands MSU's capacity to provide needed training, direct assistance, and research to address issues in urban communities.*
    - http://www.msu.edu/~cua/mission.htm

The Grand Rapids Community Economic Development Program (CEDP) is one of many projects developed through collaboration between community-based organizations and Michigan State University. The Grand Rapids CEDP was established in 1987 in order to address a variety of community and economic development issues in the region. One of the Grand Rapids CEDP's projects involve collaboration with the Coalition for Racial and Ethnic Diversity and the Grand Rapids Urban League to provide technical and organizational assistance in the development of a micro-loan funding program for central city residents. Another successful project was a teen dispute resolution project undertaken in partnership with Grand Rapids Dispute Resolution Center, and in which 19 inner city teenagers were recruited and trained in conflict management while living on MSU's campus in August 1994.

Michigan State University recently completed a study of successful projects throughout the United States. This study outlines guiding principles and theories upon which to base the development of university/community collaborations. MSU has also designed a number of workshops on this topic and has sent representatives to deliver these workshops throughout the world.

5. FACTORS OF SUCCESS

As previously stated, none of the four case studies we've identified fit neatly into the 'Co-Learning Model' approach. Nor can any of the four cases we've studied be situated concretely on Arnstein's Ladder of Participation. Nonetheless, these case studies were useful in helping us to identify five factors which appear to support the 'Co-Learning Model' and successful university/community collaborations as a whole.

1. *Long-standing relationships between universities and neighbouring communities have been developed.* Much of the success of the university/community collaborations involving Michigan State University and the San Francisco State University can be attributed to the long history the universities have had with the communities with which they collaborate. Community leaders were an essential component of the coalition that founded the San Francisco Urban Institute in 1992. Michigan State University established its first centre for Urban Affairs Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP) in 1970. MSU's Community and Economic Development Program maintains a full-time presence in targeted communities.

2. *Cooperation between academic institutions is encouraged.* Because funding support for university/community collaborations is limited, universities have a tendency to compete with each other for access to funding pools. This type of competition can hinder university/community collaboration by making the community feel as though it is a commodity. Furthermore, available resources are split, therefore reducing the strength of individual projects. In Liverpool, United Kingdom, resources for university/community collaboration are shared within the region, so that universities may put their energies into honing university/community collaboration rather than competing amongst themselves.

3. *Collaborations are action-focused rather than research-focused.* The San Francisco Urban Institute's approach illustrates the value of taking an action-focused approach to building university/community collaborations. By using this approach, the San Francisco Urban Institute has been able to fill needs identified by the communities themselves and to build trust with these communities.

4. *Universities emphasize the support of community programs already in effect.* The approach of the San Francisco Urban Institute, as alluded to above, has been commensurate with this principle. This standard has also been in effect at the University College of Cape Breton (UCCB), where research responds directly to the stated needs of the community. An essential component of university support of existing programs occurs when community agencies own the copyright to all reports which have been based on research within their community.

5. *Students develop long-term relationships with community and/or community groups.* Another factor that has led to the success of UCCB's program is that the students doing research within communities are engaged in this work for the duration of their degree (three to four years).

6. HOW CAN UNIVERSITIES CHANGE?

The movement of universities toward partnerships with communities has challenged the traditional academic institution. A university cannot remain structurally intact if it is to form mutually beneficial collaborations with communities. Not only must scholars reorient their work and revise course curricula, but these changes must be enabled from within the institutional setting.

Michigan State University (MSU) is one of the universities that has extensively studied the structural changes it must initiate in order to become an 'Outreach University'. MSU has several recommendations for universities that are pursuing university/community collaborations:

- Integration of accountability and access into core of community;

- Restructuring of the tenure system;
- Changing the faculty reward/review system;
- Addressing the pressures from funding sources;
- Fostering outreach as a major feature of university and unit missions;
- Promoting multidimensional excellence.
  - Lerner and Simon (1998: 14).

What stands out most clearly is the fact that mere cosmetic changes are not enough. A systems reorientation is needed which will enable the synthesis of research, collaboration and citizen control. This process will be very dynamic. As stated by Fullan and Steigelbauer (1991: 323): "University partnerships, if they are to work, are a new way of life, not just another project."

7. CONCLUSIONS

Building successful university/community collaborations is a learning process. There is no set method. However, there are some basic things that must be deliberated when a university is considering the formation of an outreach program. Above all, it is essential to ensure that each university/community collaboration that is undertaken will be mutually beneficial.

Universities have a lot more to learn about how to bridge the gaps that have been created over time. University members who are committed to collaboration, out of a genuine desire to extend themselves into the community and to share resources, are slowly shifting the goals and the methods of academic research. Efforts are being made to learn from the successes and challenges of disparate university/community collaborations.

We have found in our own research that the 'Co-Learning Model' is the best approach for universities to take in building successful collaborations. In particular, the 'Co-Learning Model' is exceptional in that it is fully collaborative, promotes mutual learning and encourages the equal valuation of all knowledge. By using this model as a guide, and responding to the individual needs and circumstances within each community setting, it will be possible to form mutually beneficial university/community collaborations.

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